

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Boyer-Tillamook No. 1: Replace Structures 33/18 & 33/19

PP&A No.: 3,592

Project Manager: Erich Orth, TEP-TPP-1

Location: Tillamook County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):

B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to replace two existing H frame wood pole structures 33/18 and 33/19 on the Boyer-Tillamook No. 1 115 kV transmission line in Tillamook, OR. The existing structures have reached the end of their life cycle and are in need of replacement to reduce the risk to the transmission line. The two structures would be replaced by taller, monopole glue-laminate (glulam) wood structures. Structure 33/18 would be replaced by a 79 ft. tall glulam structure, and structure 33/19 would be replaced by a 94 ft. tall glulam structure. The new structures would be installed in the same locations as the existing structures. BPA would also cut below ground surface and abandon the existing guy wire anchor hardware, as the new glulam structures would not require these attachments.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Aaron Siemers
Aaron C. Siemers
Environmental Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel
Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *April 27, 2017*

Attachment(s):
Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

The project is located in Oregon’s Coastal Lowlands ecoregion, characterized by low elevation coastal plains, beaches, dunes, estuarine marches and wetlands, with minimal topographic relief. Many of the wetlands in this region have been drained and converted to dairy pasture lands. The project site is located in the City of Tillamook, in Tillamook County, OR. The project site land use is residential and commercial. A mobile home park is located immediately to the north of the transmission right-of-way (ROW), and the Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) operates a materials storage yard to the south of the ROW. The township, range and section of the project area is listed below:

Township		Range		Section
1	S	9	W	30

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
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1. **Historic and Cultural Resources**



Explanation:

OR State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz were consulted on the project. OR SHPO issue a letter March 22, 2017, concurring that the project would have no adverse effect on cultural resources. The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz did not respond to BPA’s Letter of Determination that no historic properties would be affected by the project during the stipulated 30-day waiting period. Therefore, according to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800, BPA’s consultation requirements have been fulfilled. The OR SHPO noted in the letter of concurrence that the project is located within an area generally perceived to have a high probability for possessing archaeological sites. BPA would proceed with caution during construction and follow established inadvertent discovery protocols.

2. **Geology and Soils**



Explanation:

The project would have relatively minor soil disturbance. The two new glulam structures would be installed in the same general location as the existing transmission structures. The excavations would be backfilled with the native material and the sites would be restored. Erosion and sediment controls would be employed as necessary during construction.

3. **Plants** (including federal/state special-status species)



Explanation:

There are no special-status species present in the project area. The area to the south is a rocked ODOT materials storage yard, and the area to the north is a mobile home park. An English laurel bush is located between the two properties, in the transmission ROW near both structures, and the bush would be removed during the project. The landowner would be compensated for the damage to the bush and it would be replaced upon project completion.

4. **Wildlife** (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)



Explanation:

The Red tree vole is listed as a candidate species in the general project area. However, Red Tree Voles need conifer trees for habitat, and there is no such habitat in the project area. The project will have no effect on the Red tree vole. The birds marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, and western snowy plover are also listed in the general project area. No habitat is present for these birds at the project site and the project will have no effect on these birds. No additional federal or state special-status species will be affected by project activities.

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish** (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)



The proposed project area is not located in a floodplain. No waterways are present within 2000 ft. of the project area. Planned work would not impact water bodies or fish.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

No wetlands are present within 1200 ft. of the project area. Wetlands would not be impacted by planned project activities.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

Groundwater is most likely present within 8 to 15 ft. of ground surface in the project area. Groundwater would likely be encountered during excavation activities for both the removal of the existing transmission structures, and installation of the new glulam structures. If groundwater is encountered, BPA will implement mitigation measures to ensure that the near-surface groundwater quality is not significantly impacted by project activities. For example, vehicle and equipment fueling would not be allowed within 50 ft. of the open excavation.

Oregon DEQ records indicated that near-surface groundwater quality in the project vicinity may be impacted by historic industrial operations and fuel releases from underground storage tanks.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation:

Existing land use would not be affected by project activities. There are no specially designated areas present.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

The proposed project is located in a transmission ROW, replacing existing transmission structures. Once installed, the new glulam structures will be a similar height as the existing wood pole structures, approximately 70 ft. tall for structure 33/18 and 82 ft. tall for 33/19. Visual quality will not be significantly altered by the planned project activities.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

Temporary impacts to air quality may occur due to dust and vehicle emission during construction. No long-term impacts would occur.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Temporary noise impacts may occur due to construction activities. No long-term impacts would occur.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

BPA would follow standard health and safety protocols during construction. In addition, replacement of the poles would reduce the risk to the transmission line.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary: NA

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary: NA

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary: Oregon DEQ records show that the project area has historic releases of petroleum products and impacts to both soil and groundwater. However, hazardous concentrations of these substances in the subsurface is very unlikely, and construction will not result in uncontrolled or unpermitted release.

- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary: NA

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: BPA has contacted ODOT and the mobile home park landowner to discuss the project scope and schedule. BPA will continue to coordinate project activity with ODOT and the affected landowner.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on any environmentally sensitive resources.

Signed: /s/ Aaron Siemers
Aaron C. Siemers
Environmental Scientist

Date: April 27, 2017